



REPORT
ON THE
HEALTH OF THE BOROUGH
OF
GREAT YARMOUTH,
FOR THE YEAR 1880.


BY
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TO THE GREAT YARMOUTH URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

GENTLEMEN,

It again becomes my duty to direct your attention to the vital statistics of this Borough for the past year, and to bring in review before you such matters, as in my humble opinion, affect the health of the people.

SECTION I.

POPULATION.

The increase of population, as shown by the excess of births over deaths, amounted to 602. Although the trade of this town and port has been, and is now, very bad, and therefore very few inducements to strangers to settle in Yarmouth, still I believe we have a few immigrants. I estimate them at 398 for last year, and these figures added to those above, makes the total increase of our population, during 1880, one thousand souls.

I think the present entire population of the Borough may very fairly be taken at 49,500. The census now about to be taken will reveal to us the true number, and it is just probable we may find our total more swollen than I imagine. If the strides of the ten years ending in 1871 have been maintained during the last ten years, no doubt this pleasant surprise awaits us, but I hardly dare expect it as there has been a large falling off of the shipping trade and the industries depending upon it.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

The number of births last year missed seven of being as numerous as the year before, and it is the first time for

several years that the births have shown any decrease. The number registered during the 52 weeks ending January 1st, 1881, amounted to 1561.

As usual the Gorleston district shows the largest number of births in proportion to its inhabitants, of any of the three districts within the Borough. This same district also has the lowest death rate.

The number of deaths last year exceeded by 129 the number recorded in the previous year. The increase was principally among young children. There were 112 more deaths of those under 5 years of age during last year, than in the year before. The deaths of aged persons also show an increase. During the 52 weeks, ending January 1st, 1881, there were registered within this Borough, 952 deaths.

The Birth-rate for the year was 31·53 per 1000.

The Death-rate	„	19·37	„
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The rate of Increase	„	12·16	„
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Ninety-three of the 1561 births, or 5·8. *per cent.* were illegitimate.

Twenty-seven illegitimate infants of less than a year old, died during the year, which indicates a death rate of 29·0 *per cent. of those born*; whilst 266 infants of corresponding age, but of legitimate birth, also died, giving a death-rate of 18·1 *per cent of those born.* In other words, 10·9 *per cent.* more illegitimate infants died, than those born in wedlock. Including those of more than a twelvemonth old, there were in all 40 deaths of illegitimate children. This is not a pleasant subject to dwell upon, but nevertheless it is one which demands the most serious attention of the Sanitary Authority. I have shown above that 10 per cent. more of these poor helpless babes are crowded out of the world than those more fortunately circumstanced. Why is it so,

and what can be done to prevent it? The answer to the first question is obvious, and to the second I would reply that the Registrar of Births should be required to forward immediately after he has registered the birth of any illegitimate child, the name and address of the child and also of its mother to the Medical Officer of Health, who should keep a record of all such children, and where they are to be found. A few domicillary visits by the Medical Officer of Health, would do an immense deal of good by keeping the child's mother or its custodian on the *qui vive*, and thereby ensuring a more careful maternal attention to the child. Until some official surveillance over these children is instituted, I am afraid no reduction of their mortality can be expected.

The following table gives the totals of the Births and Deaths, for each quarter of the year, in each of the three registration districts. In all of the localities mentioned the rate of increase is less than in 1879. It is most marked in the Southern district.

BIRTHS.							DEATHS.						Increase per 1,000
DISTRICT.	12 Weeks ending.				TOTAL.	Per 1,000.	13 weeks ending.					Per 1,000	
	3rd April.	3rd July.	2nd Oct.	1st Jan.			3rd April.	3rd July.	2nd Oct.	1st Jan.	TOTAL.		
NORTHERN ... Est. Pop. 22,061	178	188	165	162	693	31.45	115	103	133	116	467	21.16	10.29
SOUTHERN ... Est. Pop. 15,027	139	118	121	146	524	29.06	81	57	109	103	350	19.41	9.65
GORLESTON AND SOUTHTOWN. Est. Pop. 9,412	88	81	87	88	344	36.54	43	31	42	26	142	15.01	21.64

The deaths in the Northern district include 60 at the Workhouse and 18 inquests.

Those in the Southern district include 13 at the Public Hospital, 24 at the Naval Asylum, and 21 inquests.

Those in Gorleston and Southtown include 6 inquests.

There were several deaths partially or wholly attributed to violence, not the subjects of any of the above-mentioned inquests, but were registered as ordinary deaths, upon the certificates of the medical men who had attended the cases. This is a matter of the most serious importance, and the Coroner equally with myself desire you to give it your very earnest attention.

The cardinal figures for the last six years are here given in juxta-position, for the sake of comparison.

	1875.	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.
No. of Births	1434	1490	1490	1553	1568	1561
No. of Deaths	1036	920	900	1057	830	959
Birth-rate	31·8	32·53	31·93	32·69	32·32	31·53
Death-rate	23·02	20·01	19·29	22·25	17·11	19·37
Rate of Increase	8·7	12·45	12·64	10·44	15·21	12·16
Zymotic Deaths	201	155	109	147	79	173
Ditto, Death-rate	4·6	3·3	2·3	3·07	1·60	3·49

PARTICULARS OF THE DEATHS.

The table on the opposite page, which has been prepared by direction of the Local Government Board, classifies the ages of the persons who died last year, and indicates the causes of the deaths of many of them.

The causes specified are those more usually influenced by the Sanitary surroundings of the deceased, and to which the attention of the Sanitary Authority should be more immediately directed.

T A B L E O F D E A T H S

During the Year 1880, in the Urban Sanitary District of Great Yarmouth, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities, and showing also the Population of such Localities, and the Births therein during the year.

(1) Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics.	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES, AT SUBJOINED AGES.							MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS IN PERSONS UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										
	Census 1871.	Estimated to middle of 1879.	Registered Births.							At ages	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 60.	60 and upwards.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				

The deaths from Infectious Diseases amounted to 173, thus indicating a death-rate from Zymotic causes alone, of 3.49. These figures are higher than any such since 1875. Scarlet Fever and Diarrhœa are very much to blame for this.

The first named disease has been more or less endemic in the town for several years past, and every third or fourth year becomes more than usually fatal. During the year several cases of scarlet fever were removed to the Infectious Diseases Hospital, but so few as to make little or no impression on the general spread of the disease. The difficulty I have to contend with in dealing with this disease is to get the information of its outbreak sufficiently early. It is only amongst paupers and the poorer classes of persons that I hear of cases of fever sickness. Amongst persons in better circumstances, one rarely hears of scarlet fever, 'till perchance a child dies, and the death certificate reveals the fact. The vast majority of folks employing their own medical attendant view fever in their houses as a secret to be most religiously kept, and by none more so than the doctor. Scarlet fever will never be stamped out whilst there is so much secrecy maintained in respect to its whereabouts. In the humbler dwellings in the town, where isolation is quite impossible, it disseminates itself most liberally. As the law stands at present one has to rely almost entirely upon persuasion, in order to induce persons suffering with infectious disease to remove to the Hospital. The notification of illnesses from infectious diseases to the Sanitary Authority should be made compulsory by law, and Section 124 of the Public Health Act, 1875, should be made to include all cases in which the Medical Officer of Health considers isolation impossible at home.

The large number of deaths of infants from Diarrhœa is a matter I have several times brought under your notice. An alarmingly large number of these deaths occurred last year. Undoubtedly it is an extremely infectious disorder, and one more difficult to control than any of the others, whose contagium is known, and can therefore be guarded against. For several years past Yarmouth has been notorious for this disease, and a Local Government Board Inspector will visit this town during the coming season, to investigate the matter. Such inquiry cannot fail to be of the most material assistance to you, in throwing some new light on the etiology of the disease, and in indicating some sanitary precautions you could adopt for the future: Pending such inquiry, which I anticipate with pleasure, I forbear dilating upon this disease in this report, and would refer you to what I have already written in former reports.

Of deaths from the other infectious diseases I have very little remark to make, Measles, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Typhoid Fever, &c., all claimed a few victims, but none of these disorders assumed epidemic proportions.

Your Sanitary Committee has been very vigilant in doing all the law will allow, in endeavouring to arrest the spread of Zymotic disorders, and although not attended with the success one could have wished, nevertheless, I am convinced had not such action been taken, the Zymotic deaths would have been more numerous than they are now.

SECTION II.

SANITARY WORK.

NUISANCE REMOVAL.

Total number attended to by the Inspectors	...
Remedied by the Inspectors' notice only	...
Referred to the Town Clerk to take proceedings	

- (a) For cleansing drains, cesspools. &c. ...
- (b) For the closing of impure wells, and for the }
laying on of the Company's water }
- (c) For the repair or reconstruction of privies ...
- (d) To channel and make up roads ...
- (e) For paving and repairing slaughter houses
- (f) For constructing new drains ...
- (g) For the erection of troughing ...
- (h) To construct new sewers ...
- (i) For repairing cellar doors, whitewashing }
and cleansing buildings, &c., &c. }
- (j) For discontinuing keeping pigs, fowls, &c., }
and for cleansing foul yards, &c. }

Several matters of great sanitary importance have occupied your attention during the past year.

New arrangements for *scavenging and night soil removal* have been effected, and each of the six wards, into which the town is divided for municipal purposes, has been made a separate district for this purpose. Each ward has now its own night soil contractor, who resides or has an office in the ward he scavengers, at which orders are received.

You have also provided a more suitable *depôt for night soil*, on the bank of the river Bure, at a distance of more than half a mile from the town, in lieu of the old Muck Holes, near the Town Wall. The new depôt is satisfactory I think, in every way.

You did great good last summer by more effectually *flushing and ventilating the sewers* than had ever been done before. Many flushing inlets were constructed on the top ends of principal lateral drains, and these connected by hose with the Water Work's hydrants from time time to

as was found necessary. Your experiment with the tall pipe ventilator, near the Barracks, Southtown, has proved a success, for where formerly sewer gas issued from the surface ventilators, fixed in the road, nothing offensive is now complained of, but rather these surface ventilators now acts as inlets for fresh air to the sewer, whilst the tall tube ventilator act as an exhaust. This success, I trust, will encourage you to place tube ventilators upon all sewers complained of as exhaling offensive gas, through their surface ventilators. A more ornate design than that of the Southtown one need not detract from its utility, and would probably recommend it more readily to the neighbourhood in which it is desirable to erect it.

The Slaughter Houses had a large share of attention last year. Several improvements in accordance with the letter from the Local Government Board, dated July 16, 1880, were insisted upon, and a strict surveillance is now kept over them. Nevertheless, as private slaughter houses in the very heart of a populous town are very objectionable, I still hope you will ere long see the propriety of suppressing these horrid places altogether, and providing a properly appointed public abattoir well outside the town.

The present *dreadfully offensive privies*, which abound in Yarmouth, you have long recognised as a terrible nuisance, and have now resolved that all such places, which shall in future be complained of, shall be remodelled on a plan provided by your Surveyor and approved of by you, whereby the ground beneath and the buildings around are protected from soakage from the contents of the privy.

You have given considerable attention to the *Sanitary condition of Cobholm Island*, and at your request I prepared a special report upon this locality. You are now

engaged in carrying out the suggestions I there made for its improvement, and I sincerely trust the public health of that district may be materially benefitted thereby.

The closure of *impure drinking water wells* and the enforcing of a more wholesome supply from the Water Company's main, the detection and prosecution of *adulterant milk-sellers*, the *inspection of markets* and butchers' shops, and the seizure of unwholesome fruit, meat, &c., and the suppression of numerous nuisances of all kinds are matters in which you and your officers have been engaged during the past year.

A movement is now on foot for the establishment of Public Sea Water Swimming Baths in this town. I consider it very desirable that such baths should be established and I sincerely hope the project will be accomplished.

Equally should I be glad to see you adopt "the Baths and Wash-houses Act" in this Borough. To very many of the small cramped houses in the rows no wash-house or yard is attached, and therefore the household washing is done in the living room, and the clothes dried there, or in an upper room. All the discomforts of the washing day are so mixed up with the poor people's living and sleeping that one cannot be surprised that rheumatism, pneumonia bronchitis, often result.

By means of the Bath and Wash-houses Act you would be enabled to provide a poor person with a warm soft water bath for 2d., which with a good supply of soap and towel, would indeed be a boon to hundreds of the poor creatures inhabiting the town.

The wash-houses you would provide under the Act, would afford the poor people, for a charge of 2d. or 3d.

every facility for washing and drying their linen, including the use of tubs, hot water, conveniences for drying, &c., &c. How very much better for the people's health would this arrangement be than the present. I recommend the matter to your serious consideration.

The Local Government Board has recently framed some Bye-laws for the Sanitary inspection and regulation of houses in which visitors and others are lodged. I would strongly advise you to adopt them in this town.

The frightful manner in which small houses are overcrowded during the lodging season, is notorious, and I am convinced a great deal of sickness, especially among children, is the result. Any householder who could produce a sanitary certificate of the wholesomeness of his house would, undoubtedly, more readily let his lodgings than an uncertified neighbour; hence the great good which would result not only to the individual lodging house keepers, but also to the town generally, from the fact of its Sanitary Authority being so solicitous for the health of visitors.

I thank you much for the kind consideration you have ever given to all Sanitary matters I have brought before you,

And am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN BATELY,

Medical Officer of Health.